



# OLR RESEARCH REPORT

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## **MASSACHUSETTS CHILD PSYCHIATRY ACCESS PROJECT**

By: Nicole Dube, Associate Analyst

You asked for a summary of the Massachusetts Child Psychiatry Access Project. You also want to know if other states have similar programs.

### **SUMMARY**

The Massachusetts Child Psychiatry Access Project ([MCPAP](#)) is a regional system of children's mental health consultation teams that help primary care providers (PCPs) serving children with mental health conditions. Six regional teams, consisting of child psychiatrists, licensed social workers or psychologists, care coordinators, and administrative support staff, provide information and resources to PCPs serving children with mental health conditions, regardless of their insurance status.

The program was established in 2003 as a pilot and was implemented statewide the following year. It is administered by the Massachusetts Behavioral Health Partnership (the state's contracted Medicaid mental health and substance abuse provider) and is funded primarily by the Department of Mental Health (DMH) and also receives limited third-party insurance reimbursements for in-person visits (see below).

MCPAP's goal is to increase PCPs' familiarity with common psychiatric diagnoses and available public and private community-based mental health services. The program is free to all PCPs serving children, although providers must enroll to access services. The program's 422 participating primary care practices (consisting of 1,533 full-time PCPs)

may call their MCPAP regional team for a consultation. If necessary, the team may request to meet the child for an in-person evaluation, refer the PCP to available community-based mental health services, or refer the child to the team's psychiatrist for evaluation or interim treatment.

In 2007, MCPAP administered a pilot program in six Western Massachusetts public schools in order to improve students' access to mental health services. These schools had access to the regional MCPAP hotline and were provided in-person and telephone consultations as well as care coordination. Participating schools found the program to be feasible, cost-effective, and clinically valuable. However, the state did not have funding to implement the program statewide.

According to the National Network of Child Psychiatry Access Programs, 23 other states have similar team-based children's mental health consultation programs. Connecticut does not have such a program.

## **MCPAP**

### ***Program Goals***

MCPAP's goals are to:

1. improve treatment access for children with psychiatric conditions,
2. promote the inclusion of child psychiatry within the scope of primary care practice,
3. restore relationships between PCPs and child psychiatrists, and
4. promote the rational use of scarce specialty resources by the most complex and high-risk children.

### ***Program History***

MCPAP was created as a pilot in 2003, in response to concerns expressed among New England states over the increasing number of Medicaid children receiving multiple psychotropic medications, especially young children. The federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services and MassHealth (the state's Medicaid program) provided a grant to UMass Medical School to develop the pilot program in the state's central region that provided consultation to pediatricians on child psychiatric conditions, including medication prescription.

The Massachusetts Behavioral Health Partnership implemented the program statewide in 2004. The program receives \$2.5 million from DMH and \$100,000 in third-party insurance billing for in-person visits.

### ***MCPAP Regional Teams***

MCPAP consists of six regional teams, one each in the southeast, central, northeast, and western regions and two in the Boston region. Each regional team consists of child psychiatrists, licensed social workers or psychologists, care coordinators, and administrative support staff. Some teams also have registered clinical nurse specialists.

Teams provide ongoing consultation and education to PCPs treating children with mental health issues. A PCP enrolled in the program may call for a telephone consultation with a child psychiatrist regardless of the child's insurance status. Telephone consultations are provided on weekdays within 30 minutes of request. PCPs may call with a general or patient-specific question regarding (1) diagnosis and treatment of a mental health disorder, (2) use of certain medications or mental health screening tools, or (3) available community resources.

Depending on the situation, a team member may (1) request to meet the patient for an in-person evaluation in order to answer the PCP's question, (2) refer the PCP to community-based services, or (3) recommend that the patient see the team's psychiatrist for evaluation or interim treatment.

### **OTHER STATES' PROGRAMS**

According to the National Network of Child Psychiatry Access Programs, 23 states have consultation programs similar to MCPAP, which are listed in Table 1.

**Table 1: State Child Psychiatry Access Programs**

<b>State</b>	<b>Program</b>
Alaska	Alaska Partnership Assistance Line
Arkansas	Psych TLC
California	Smart Care PC2
Colorado	Colorado Child Psychiatry Consultation Service
Delaware	Primary Care Consultation
Florida	Florida Pediatric Psychiatry Hotline
Illinois	Illinois DocAssist
Iowa	Child and Youth Psychiatric Consult Project of Iowa
Louisiana	Gulf Coast Consultation in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Program
Maine	Child Psychiatry Access Program
Massachusetts	Massachusetts Child Psychiatry Access Program
Michigan	University of Michigan Child Collaborative Consultation Program
Missouri	Collaborative Care at Washington University School of Medicine, Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
New Hampshire	Teen Mental Health Project, Dartmouth Medical School
New Jersey	New Jersey Primary Care Child Psychiatry Collaborative Program
New York	Project TEACH
North Carolina	Mental Health Consultation Clinic of the School Health Alliance for Forsyth County
Ohio	Ohio Pediatric Psychiatry Network
Pennsylvania	Children's Community Pediatrics Behavioral Health and Developmental Services
Texas	Texas Pediatric Access to Subspecialists
Vermont	Teen Mental Health Project, Dartmouth Medical School
Washington	Partnership Access Line
Wyoming	Partnership Access Line
Wisconsin	ChildPsych 911 Collaborative Consultative Service

Source: National Network of Child Psychiatry Access Programs website, <http://nncpap.org/members/current-programs/>.

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